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Security Council

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Letter dated 12 November 2001 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the question of Western Sahara, in particular to the activities of my Personal Envoy, James A. Baker III, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1359 (2001) of 29 June 2001.

In my report to the Security Council of 20 June 2001 (S/2001/613), I recommended that the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) be extended until 30 November 2001 and informed the Council that, should my Personal Envoy decide to continue with the discussions about the draft Framework Agreement after that date in order to try and negotiate such changes in the draft Framework Agreement that would make it acceptable to Morocco, the Frente POLISARIO, Algeria and Mauritania, it would be my intention to recommend to the Council that the mandate of MINURSO extended to permit time for such negotiations. I also informed the Council that if, on the other hand, by the end of that period, my Personal Envoy should conclude that it would not be worthwhile to continue with the consultations, the Council could decide to review the mandate of MINURSO and consider what further role it could play under the circumstances.

As will be recalled, having considered the recommendations contained in my report of 20 June 2001, in its resolution 1359 (2001), the Council encouraged the parties to discuss the draft Framework Agreement under the auspices of the Personal Envoy and to negotiate any specific changes they would like to see in that proposal, as well as to discuss any other proposal for a political solution, which may be put forward by the parties, to arrive at a mutually acceptable agreement. The Council also affirmed that, while the discussions referred to above were in progress, the official proposals submitted by the Frente POLISARIO to overcome the obstacles preventing the implementation of the Settlement Plan would be considered. In addition, the Council requested me to provide an assessment of the situation before the end of the present mandate and, as appropriate, recommendations on the future mandate and composition of MINURSO.

Since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1359 (2001) on 29 June 2001, my Personal Envoy has been consulting with the parties within the framework of that resolution. He has, however, recently informed me that he would need additional time for these consultations. Accordingly, I propose that the Council authorize a technical extension of the mandate of MINURSO for a period of two

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months, through 31 January 2002. It would be my intention to submit my report on Western Sahara to the Council in good time before that date.

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**